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Message Text

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S E C R E T ATHENS 13115

EXDIS

NOFORN

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE TO SECDEF AND TO
GENERAL HAIG, USNMR SHAPE, IMMEDIATE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, NATO, GR
SUBJECT: GREECE'S NATO TIES

1. IN WHAT APPEARS TO US A NEW AND FAVORABLE DEVELOPMENT IN GREECE'S EVOLVING RELATIONSHIP WITH NATO, MAJOR GENERAL PAPACONSTANTINOU, DIRECTOR OF THE A BRANCH (I.E. OPERATIONS, PLANS, TRAINING AND INTELLIGENCE), SUPREME HELLENIC ARMED FORCES, TOLD THE ARMY ATTACHE AND AN EMBASSY OFFICER DECEMBER 9 THAT THE GOG IS READY AND ANXIOUS TO CONTINUE A STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS WHICH WILL LEAD GRADUALLY TO THE RESTORATION OF GREECE'S MILITARY TIES WITH NATO.

2. WHILE PAPACONSTANTINOU'S PRESENTATION INCLUDED THE USUAL REFERENCES TO THE NEED TO RESOLVE THE CYPRUS PROBLEM AND TO AWAIT FURTHER EVOLUTION OF POLITICAL FACTORS ON THE GREEK SIDE, HE ADDED A NEW NOTE BY EMPHASIZING THE GOG'S WILL TO ACCELERATE AND INTENSIFY THE PROCESS OF AGAIN ASSOCIATING GREECE WITH NATO'S MILITARY SIDE. AS AN EXAMPLE, PAPACONSTANTINOU STATED THAT THE GOG AND THE HELLENIC ARMED FORCES ARE ANXIOUS TO PARTICIPATE IN WINTEX 77, A NATO STAFF COMMAND POST EXERCISE.

3. PAPACONSTANTINOU, WHO IS MORE DIRECT AND OPEN THAN MOST
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GREEKS, ALLEGED THAT WHILE IN LONDON RECENTLY FOR THE NPG

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MEETING, DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROFF AND HELLENIC ARMED FORCES
CHIEF DAVOS HAD OUTLINED THIS DESIRE FOR A STEP-BY-STEP
RETURN TO NATO TO DEFENSE SECRETARY RUMSFELD AND GENERAL HAIG.
PAPACONSTANTINOU, WHO ATTENDED THE MEETING IN WHICH THIS EXCHANGE
TOOK PLACE, IMPLIED, HOWEVER, THAT THE MANNER IN WHICH IT WAS
DONE MAY HAVE LEFT THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND SACEUR UNCLEAR
AS TO THE MEANING OF THE GREEK OFFER, WITH THE RESULT THAT
IT WAS NOT PICKED UP.

4. PAPACONSTANTINOU WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE AND GENERAL VAZAIOS
(DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE HELLENIC ARMED FORCES) WILL BE IN NAPLES
DECEMBER 14-15 TO ATTEND A NATO STRATEGY CONFERENCE. AT THAT
TIME, HE SAID, THEY PLAN AGAIN TO BRING UP WITH GENERAL HAIG
THE GREEK DESIRE FOR PARTICIPATION IN NATO EXERCISES, AS PART
OF A GRADUAL PROCESS OF REINTEGRATION INTO NATO, BEGINNING
WITH WINTEX 77.

5. COMMENT: OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT GREECE HAS A STANDING
INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN NATO EXERCISES AND THAT ON
SPECIFIC PAST OCCASIONS HAS DECLINED TO DO SO. IT SEEMS IN-
CONCEIVABLE THAT PAPACONSTANTINOU IS UNAWARE OF THIS SITUATION
BUT WHATEVER MISUNDERSTANDINGS MAY EXIST OR WHATEVER THE ULTERIOR
PURPOSE OF PAPACONSTANTINOU'S COMMENTS, IT DOES SEEM THAT HE
WAS SIGNALING A NEW GREEK WILLINGNESS TO BEGIN TO PARTICIPATE
IN NATO EXERCISES, WHILE WE ARE NOT UNAWARE OF A JUSTIFIABLE
CONCERN THAT GREECE MAY BE SEEKING TO CARVE OUT A SORT OF HALF-WAY
HOUSE IN NATO, WE BELIEVE THAT IT IS IN OUR INTEREST, CAREFULLY
AND WITH GREAT DISCRETION, TO ENCOURAGE THE PROCESS OF REIN-
TEGRATION THROUGH SUCH STEPS AS OUTLINED TO US BY PAPACONSTINOU.
THUS WE WANTED TO BE SURE THAT GENERAL HUAIG WAS AWARE
OF APAPCONSTANTINOU'S REMARKS BEFORE ANY MEETING HE MIGHT HAVE
NEXT WEEK WITH GENERAL VAZAIOS.
KUBISCH

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDEES

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